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ART. IX.—*Storia della Guerra dell' Indipendenza degli Stati Uniti d' America scritta da Carlo Botta.* Parigi per D. Colas, 1809.

Histoire de la guerre de l'Indépendance des Etats Unis d' Amérique par M. Charles Botta, &c. traduite de l'Italian et précédée d'une introduction par M. L. De Sevelinges, ouvrage orné de plans et cartes géographiques. Paris, J. G. Dentu, 1812.

History of the war of the Independence of the United States of America, written by Charles Botta, translated from the Italian by George Alexander Otis. Philadelphia. 1820.

HISTORY, according to the ancients, is one of the muses, and it is her duty no less than that of the others to give pleasure while she gives instruction. The mere enumeration of important events, however correct and circumstantial, is not history, nor has the annalist, the chronologist, or the antiquary any claim to be called an historian. He, who aspires to this name, must not only state great achievements truly and particularly, display the characters and motives of those who performed them, and trace their consequences; he must arrange and connect the facts recorded by him, which are but the fragments of history, in such a manner that they may illustrate each other, and clothe them in a simple and dignified style, thus rendering them one uniform and beautiful whole. He must not only dare to utter no falsehood and fear to utter no truth, but must catch with the eye and describe with the pen of the poet those general features and striking peculiarities, which characterise and identify the scenes of his narrative or the actors in them; and recalling them, as it were, into existence, place them living and moving before us. Though perfectly impartial towards all persons, he is not to be indifferent to the moral qualities of actions or their influence on the happiness of men, nor to relate in one unvarying tone of apathy the triumph of justice, and that of guilt, the self-devotion of disinterested patriotism and the recklessness of ambition; but should appeal to the feelings as boldly, though not in the same manner, as the poet or the orator; and exhibit animated models of character and impressive lessons of conduct.

Such or nearly such was the model of historical excellence, which ancient critics recommended and ancient writers sought to attain; but in this department of literature, though some perhaps may think in this alone, the moderns have formed a

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still higher idea of perfection than the ancients. All which the latter demanded is still required, at least in theory, and a new task is imposed. It is not enough to satisfy the critics of the present day that an historian should adhere strictly and fearlessly to the truth, should preserve the unity of his subject and the continuity of his narrative, should describe with fidelity and animation the scenes and the progress of events, display the motives and characters of his heroes, and exhibit and cherish a pure and lively moral taste ; all this may be done, and yet what is now deemed the most important duty of the historian be left undone. It is not enough that he should possess the excellences of the poet and the orator, he must add to them those of the philosopher and the political economist, he must show the pursuits, habits, ideas, and feelings of the mass of the people, their advances in civilization and refinement, the state of education, morals, and manners among them, that of their laws, finances, and commerce, their improvements in the arts and sciences, and in literature ; and the progress of public opinion on political subjects, with its influence on the form and administration of government and on domestic life ; and must make us acquainted with states and communities, rather than with singular and illustrious individuals. To this object the intermediate chapters of Hume are entirely devoted. Much information on these subjects is undoubtedly to be gathered from the ancient historians. The perfection of their narratives enables us to form some tolerably correct idea of the state of society among them, but they do not make it their chief study to display it, like many of the writers of history in our own times. Some of these writers on the other hand attach themselves too exclusively to this object ; not that they ever give us too much knowledge on the subject, but too little of the facts from which that knowledge is deduced ; and in their fondness for generalizing defeat their own purpose, and become indefinite, where they would be comprehensive. Hence works have been given to the public under the name of histories, which contain no connected story whatever, and are at best no more than the reflections of their authors on reading history, speculations on the character of some particular people, illustrated by occasional statements of fact, and this too when the knowledge they are designed to convey would have been more clearly as well as more agreeably communicated by a simple narrative. If the ancients attached

too much importance to the brilliant achievements of their great men, it is as frequent an error among us to underrate the effect of single events on the situation of the community, and the influence of an individual upon his age. It has even been asserted that all periods are equally worthy of the labors of the philosophical historian, since the moral, physical, and intellectual condition of the mass of the people, in comparison with which the manœuvres of armies, the intrigues of cabinets, and the artifices of courtiers are unworthy of regard, may be as thoroughly investigated and as completely displayed in peaceful times, as amid wars and revolutions. But this is extravagant. Great changes, especially such as are brought about by human exertion, are often the origin, and still oftener the result of great mental excitement, and therefore the characters of individuals and of nations are more powerfully affected and more perfectly developed by them, than by their ordinary, peaceful, domestic pursuits. It is true indeed that though remarkable occurrences are the common indication, they are not the certain proof, still less the measure of the importance of any period as a subject of history; and that the comparative interest of human actions in the eye of the historian depends less on the difficulty of performing them, on the astonishment or applause, which they excite at the moment, or on the number of persons engaged in them, than on their ultimate effects. Imposing the nominal duty of a penny a pound on tea was no very illustrious achievement of the British parliament, and independently of its consequences would not deserve notice; but taken in connexion with them, it is a more important event in history than many a battle in which thousands have fallen, or many of the political intrigues by which thrones have been subverted.

Yet periods of great civil commotion, when a whole people are forced into immediate and intense action, when the foundations of society are shaken, and ancient political institutions overthrown, are objects of peculiar interest; and the events which immediately precede and prepare the way for such revolutions, and the operation of the secret causes, which ultimately produce and the consequences which follow them, are always worthy of our attention, and eminently so when they operate among ourselves. It is true that the history of the times nearest to our own, presenting habits and manners, with which we are familiar, and rejecting

those embellishments, which may be applied, at least with impunity, to that of a remote age, does not afford so much excitement or gratification to youthful curiosity, but it is more engaging as well as more useful to such as read with reference to their own condition, and feeling a concern in the realities of life, seek to apply their knowledge to some practical purpose.

It is equally true that it is difficult for a writer to appear impartial or to be so in relating occurrences, which have an immediate and conspicuous influence on himself and those around him; but it must be recollected on the other hand that he is more likely to be deceived and may more easily deceive others, with regard to circumstances of a distant date. Though we naturally distrust the judgment of those who publish accounts of recent events, we rely most confidently on their statements of important and notorious facts. The history of the last century, including an investigation of the first origin and silent progress of the feelings and opinions which have at length convulsed so many European nations, and whose operation is far from being ended, will long be a subject of great and increasing interest. Yet our language has produced no historical work relating to any part of that century, which will be preserved as a choice specimen of literature. On this topic, if America has done nothing, England has done no more. Both have accumulated abundant materials for such works. In both the freedom of the press has afforded opportunity, an opportunity, which has not been neglected, for the publication of authentic and unauthentic documents without number; and this circumstance renders it so much the more surprising that no writer in our language has made a successful attempt to combine these materials into a lasting monument of literary fame. There is, in our opinion, no event in the whole course of that century, which affords to the historian a more entertaining or instructive theme, or one whose effects seem likely to be more extensive and permanent, than the contest between Great Britain and her American colonies.

We think Mr Botta, therefore, very happy, if we ought not rather to say very wise, in the choice of his subject. The American revolution is an object of permanent and increasing interest in other countries as well as our own, not only because the unexampled rapidity with which this nation has advanced in population and wealth will render the occurrences of its early history attractive to statesmen in every age, but because

it was the first of that series of revolutions, which in the close of the last and beginning of the present century have shaken the very foundations of government throughout Europe and America. Not that we would compare with it those, by which it has been followed. It was as different from them in its origin and conduct, as in its event. But it had no small influence in producing them, for while the character and motives of those who accomplished it were, as they still are, little known among foreigners, its result was conspicuous, and appeared to those, who saw no more, to offer an example easily imitated. It derives an additional interest from its effects on the political ideas and feelings of men. It affords support to the theoretical principles on which republics are founded, gives the confidence of experience to those who maintain that it is practicable and useful as well as speculatively right for the citizens of a state, however extensive and populous, to exercise a direct control over their rulers, and a strong impulse to that desire of security, that restlessness under arbitrary power, which has long existed wherever the English language was spoken, and has lately found its way to the humblest and most ignorant classes on the continent of Europe; and which, feeble, unenlightened, and misguided as it now is there, is yet destined, if we are not mistaken in the signs of the times, to alter materially the whole structure of society among them.

But the historical interest of our revolution does not depend solely on the importance of its direct consequences and the extent of the political and moral changes, which it has tended at least to hasten. It will always command attention as a complete development of the temper, motives, and resources of a whole nation. It was not, like most wars, a contest between cabinets or armies, a mere trial of military or diplomatic skill, but the united effort of a people as individuals for the vindication of their rights. Nor was it a single burst of exasperated feeling, a short madness, one of those revolutions, in which men sometimes exhaust themselves by struggling to acquire a liberty, which they know not how to value or to maintain, and then fall back into the same condition as before; but a sober, deliberate, calculating resistance of oppression, adapting its means to its end, and pursuing that end through the greatest sacrifices of comfort and feeling. It does not indeed excite attention by accounts of very numerous armies or remarkably bloody battles, yet we do not therefore think, as some have

done, that it is deficient in interest; for the passions of the contest operated directly and intensely on every man, and war itself often found its way to the fireside and severed the strongest and tenderest ties; circumstances, which give the clearest insight into the temper and character of the people and make the most lively impression on the feelings. It is no less true in real than in fictitious narrative, that the most engaging and pathetic scenes are those, which exhibit the efforts and sufferings of individuals.

It has been said that the history of the American revolution, at least before the meeting of Congress, necessarily wants unity, as it is not an account of one nation, but of thirteen different states, among which the attention is distracted. But it seems to us that the unity of the subject is not diminished by this variety of agents, since their exertions were all directed to the same end. The establishment of so close an union among thirteen distinct, unconnected and in some instances jealous colonies, that it has lasted much longer than the particular danger which gave rise to it, is in itself a most interesting phenomenon, and the means, by which it was effected are well worthy of our study.

The simple fact that the revolution was accomplished within the limits of a single life, so that the same persons who began, lived to complete it and enjoy its result, adds another charm to its history; for in consequence of this, our interest in many of the individuals conspicuous at the beginning of the contest, never ceases, but is combined throughout with that which we feel in the event. Besides the freedom of debate and of the press not only excited and developed more perfectly the passions of those engaged in the controversy, but has provided better means of information than could have been obtained under any other circumstances. Add to all this, that Mr Botta may claim the authority of an almost contemporary historian, while as a foreigner he is exempted from the danger and even from the suspicion of partiality, to which contemporaries are commonly exposed.

He seems well aware of the advantages peculiar to his subject, especially of those, which tend to render his work attractive and entertaining, evidently choosing the ancient historians as his model, and endeavoring to instruct his readers by examples, to present a connected and winning narrative, more than to exhibit a view of the moral, intellectual, and political

condition of the people. He makes, indeed, some general reflections on the manners and pursuits of the colonists, but does not communicate any statistical details, and is by no means sufficiently particular in giving an account of the commerce of the colonies, and of the restraints imposed on it, restraints, which were the chief cause of complaint before the revolution, as our exemption from them has been of our subsequent prosperity. This writer possesses in a remarkable degree, what Rapin deems the most essential quality of an historian, the art of telling a story, by which we mean, and so probably did the learned critic, not the art of relating a single anecdote, but that of making his whole work one continuous and complete narrative, the several parts of which, though various, are connected by natural and agreeable transitions, are duly proportioned to each other, and each in its place.

It has been objected, but we think incorrectly, that the relation in this work of the battles, which took place in the West Indies and in Europe, is irrelevant to the American revolution, and violates the unity of the narrative. They were contests between the allies and the enemies of the United States, and had each its influence in hastening or retarding the termination of hostilities and the acknowledgment of our independence. They are described too with all due brevity and with great accuracy and spirit, and appear to us to add not a little to the interest of the story. The bloody and fruitless conflicts of those immense fleets and armies, collected and equipped at the expense of millions, by rival nations, with no other motive than their mutual desire of subjecting each other to the humiliation of defeat, form a striking contrast with the struggles of the colonists, who, destitute of wealth, of arms, of every thing but a bare subsistence, engaged in war from the highest motives, and brought about such important results, as will render their skirmishes, inconsiderable as they seemed at the time in comparison with the battles of the European powers, far more conspicuous in history.

Our author's sketches of the characters of individuals are in the main just, but want that discriminating minuteness, which distinguishes his descriptions of scenery and events. In many of the latter he is singularly happy. His description of Boston gives as distinct an idea of the town and its vicinity as a map; and that of the situation and siege of Gibraltar is a complete and glowing picture. He evinces much discretion

and good taste in adapting the length and particularity of different parts of his history to the interest of the subjects to which they relate, rapidly glancing over those events, which, however talked of when they happened, do not fix our attention by the importance of their consequences, or afford an opportunity for delighting his readers by beautiful and poetical description.

The candor and impartiality displayed throughout this history are a great excellence in the work, though considering the situation of the author, it may be thought less meritorious in him to possess, than it would have been disgraceful to want them. His diligence in consulting the best sources of information within his reach, and the accuracy which, in general, results from it, are still more worthy of praise and not less important. We would not be understood to say that his statements of fact are never erroneous. In his account of the battle of Breed's hill he conveys the idea that the Americans remained there two nights; for he says that the Americans continued to work the whole day after they took possession of the heights with unshaken constancy, and towards night had much advanced a trench, which descended towards Mystic river; that the English then took the resolution to attack them, and that on the seventeenth of June in pursuance of this resolution the British camp was in motion between twelve and one clock. He mentions also the grateful liberality of the state, in extending every mark of kindness and protection to the children of General Montgomery. Now unluckily the general never had any children. These mistakes of fact are of little importance, and we believe that even of such as these the work contains a far smaller number than might be expected from the minuteness with which circumstances are often detailed in it, and the difficulty of obtaining correct information with regard to our history on the continent of Europe. But few as they are, it would have been convenient to the American reader, if the translator had corrected them in his notes.

Mr Botta thinks himself at liberty to deviate from the exact truth in recording public speeches. For this he has the example of ancient writers, but it is not admissible according to the rules of modern criticism. An author may insert in his history any speech actually made, or an extract from it, or its substance expressed in his own words, giving his readers to un-

derstand which of these he has undertaken to do, but ought not to ascribe to any individual arguments not his own. The following is the notice of the author in relation to this subject.

‘There will be found, in the course of this history, several discourses of a certain length. Those I have put in the mouth of the different speakers have really been pronounced by them, and upon those very occasions which are treated of in the work. I should, however, mention that I have sometimes made a single orator say what has been said in substance by others of the same party. Sometimes, also, but rarely, using the liberty granted in all times to historians, I have ventured to add a small number of phrases, which appeared to me to coincide perfectly with the sense of the orator, and proper to enforce his opinion: this has happened especially in the two discourses pronounced before Congress, for and against independence, by Richard Henry Lee, and John Dickinson.

‘It will not escape attentive readers, that in some of these discourses are found predictions which time has accomplished. I affirm that these remarkable passages belong entirely to the authors cited. In order that these might not resemble those of the poets, always made after the fact, I have been so scrupulous as to translate them, word for word, from the original language.’ p. ix.

Now, in our opinion, whenever he professes to repeat the words of another he ought to translate them, if not literally, at least fairly, preserving substantially the ideas and arrangement of the original. And we must say further, that the liberties he has taken are, in some instances, greater than this notice would lead us to suppose. Many of the discourses introduced are indeed translated into Italian with sufficient fidelity, or at least not very materially altered, but some are very different from the speeches actually made, as that of Captain Harvey in answer to Wilkes; and as to those of Lee and Dickinson, we believe them to be mere fictions, the former too an unskilful fiction, not appropriate to the individual in whose mouth it is put, and tending to misrepresent his style of oratory, rather than to illustrate it.

The moral and political reflections of this writer are generally ingenious and pertinent, though they sometimes betray too much subtlety and refinement of thought. The designs and intrigues of the various courts of Europe, the motives of France and Spain for aiding the Americans to carry on the war, yet attempting to prevent the establishment of their inde-

pendence and impede their prosperity, are accurately and fairly stated by this writer; but in some of his remarks on the intentions and conduct of the colonists before the declaration of independence, he shows a want of acquaintance with their manners and feelings, which, however natural and pardonable it may be in him, is injurious to his work. He seems to admit the pretensions of some of the ministerial writers of that day, that our ancestors owed no little gratitude to the British government for being treated with less severity than the colonists of other European nations. It is certain that British subjects, whether inhabitants of England or of the colonies, were not so much exposed to the caprices of arbitrary power as the subjects of the continental sovereigns. This arose, however, not from any singular tenderness or indulgence in their rulers, which might entitle them to lay claim to the gratitude of the people, but from the temper of the people themselves, who would not endure oppression, and understood that their rights were not a grant from the crown, but the power of the crown a grant from them.

Speaking of the acquittal of Captain Preston and his soldiers, tried at Boston in 1770, the author says, it was 'a thing truly remarkable, that in the midst of such a commotion, and at a moment when the effervescence of minds was so extreme, this judgment so little conformable to the wishes of the multitude, should have been pronounced. So admirable were the judicial regulations established in these countries, and so firm was the resolution of the judges to obey the law in defiance of all influence whatsoever.' p. 162. It would be no wonder that the acquittal of these men should be desired by the judges, since they had been nominated by governors appointed by the king; but the fact is, that they were acquitted by the jury, by twelve men chosen by lot from the county in which the massacre, as it is called, took place, a fact far more honorable to the people than the statement of Botta.

We find in the work before us repeated suggestions, that if this or that circumstance had occurred, if the stamp act had been carried into immediate execution—if the ministry had placed less reliance on the divisions of the colonists—if America had received no aid from Europe—if Burgoyne had effected a junction with Howe—if Howe had attacked the army of Congress—if the treasonable project of Arnold had succeeded—or if Admiral Rodney had remained in America; the

result of the contest would have been different ; as if the independence of the colonists were produced by a series of happy accidents, and not by their own resolution and perseverance. These suggestions, whatever dramatic effect they may give to the work, by representing the Americans to be always in imminent danger, are entirely unfounded. Either of these events or many others might have prolonged the war, and aggravated very greatly the labors and privations of the people, but no event in the ordinary course of nature, nothing short of the annihilation of their physical strength, could have reduced them to submission. Their resistance must at least have been successful, because they would not yield.

We do not mean to attach too much consequence to the errors just mentioned, but there is one pervading almost the whole of the first volume, which seems to us so important in relation to the character of our ancestors, that we must ask the indulgence of our readers, while we examine it somewhat minutely. It is a total, though undoubtedly an innocent misrepresentation of the sentiments entertained by the colonists towards Great Britain before the revolution.

In the very beginning of the work we find among others the following remarks :

‘ The love of the sovereign and their ancient country, which the first colonists might have retained in their new establishment, gradually diminished in the hearts of their descendants as successive generations removed them further from their original stock, and when the revolution commenced, of which we purpose to write the history, the inhabitants of the English colonies were, in general, but the third, fourth, and even the fifth generation from the original colonists, who had left England to establish themselves in the new regions of America. At such a distance the feelings of consanguinity became feeble or extinct ; and the remembrance of their ancestors lived more in their memories than in their hearts. The greater part of the colonists had heard nothing of Great Britain, excepting that it was a distant kingdom from which their ancestors had been barbarously expelled or hunted away, as they had been forced to take refuge in the deserts and forests of America inhabited only by savage men, and prowling beasts or venomous and horrible serpents. The distance of government diminishes its force ; either because in the absence of the splendor and magnificence of the throne, men yield obedience only to its power, unsupported by the influence of illusion and respect, or because the agents of authority in distant countries, exercising a larger discretion in the execution of the laws, inspire

the people governed with greater hope of being able to escape their restraints.'—'It follows of necessity that as the means of restraint became almost illusory in the hands of the government, there must have arisen and gradually increased in the minds of the Americans the hope, and with it the desire to shake off the yoke of English superiority.' p. 10—12.

In regard to their sentiments in 1763, it is said, that

'Already those who were the most zealous for liberty, or the most ambitious, had formed in the secret of their hearts the resolution to shake off the yoke of England, whenever a favorable occasion should present.'—'That in the late war great numbers of the colonists had renounced the arts of peace, and assuming the sword instead of the spade, had learned the exercise of arms, inured their bodies to military fatigues, and their minds to the dangers of battle; they had, in a word, lost all the habits of agriculture and of commerce, and acquired those of the military profession. The being that has the consciousness of his force, becomes doubly strong, and the yoke he feels in a condition to break, is borne with difficulty; thus the skill recently acquired in the use of arms, become general among the Americans, rendered obedience infinitely more intolerable to them.'—'The greater number, however, satisfied with the ancient terms of connexion with England, were reluctant to dissolve it, provided she would abandon all idea of ulterior usurpations. Even the most intrepid in the defence of their privileges, could not endure the thought of renouncing every species of dependence on their legitimate sovereign. This project they condemned the more decidedly, as they perceived that in its execution they must not only encounter all the forces of England, by so many victories become formidable to the universe, but also must resort to the assistance of a nation, in language, manners, and customs, so different from themselves; of a nation they had so long been accustomed to hate, and to combat under the banners of their mother country.' pp. 32—34.

Again referring to the year 1768 we find the following passage.

'The legislative power of the parliament over the colonies was not made the subject of doubt, but denied. Adopting the opinion of those, who in the two houses had opposed the repeal of the stamp act, the patriots affirmed that all distinction between internal and external taxes was chimerical, and that parliament had no right to impose the one or the other; that it had no power to make laws to bind the colonies; and, finally, they went so far as to maintain, that not being represented in parliament, they were exempted from every sort of dependence towards it.

‘The rights which the colonists pretended to enjoy, were explained with great perspicuity, and a certain elegance of style, in pamphlet entitled, *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer, to the inhabitants of the English colonies*. They were received with great and universal favor: the author was John Dickenson.’ p. 145.

Speaking of the American Congress in 1774, he says,

‘The colonists looked upon it as a convention of men who, in some mode or other, were to deliver their country from the perils that menaced it. The greater part believed that their ability, their prudence, and their immense influence with the people, would enable them to obtain from the government the removal of the evils that oppressed them, and the reestablishment of the ancient order of things. Some others cherished the belief, that they would find means to conduct the American nation to that independence, which was the first and most ardent of their aspirations, or rather the sole object of that intense passion which stung and tormented them, night and day.’ p. 199.

And afterwards in relation to the same body.

‘And as those who are inclined to war, generally affect the most earnest desire of peace, congress addressed a letter to general Gage, praying him to put a stop to the hostile preparations, which might provoke a pacific people to have recourse to arms, and thus prevent the endeavours of the congress to restore a good understanding with the parent state, and involve the nation in all the horrors of a civil war.’ p. 206.

And further on their adjournment.

‘No one will deny, that this assembly knew how to appreciate the circumstances of the time, and demonstrated a rare sagacity, in leading them to cooperate in their designs. They not only found means to invigorate the opinions which then prevailed in America, but also to diffuse and propagate them surprisingly; applauding the ardent, stimulating the torpid, and conciliating the adverse. They were lavish in protestations of loyalty to the king; which could not fail to answer the end they proposed,—that of finding a pretext and excuse for ulterior resolutions, in case their remonstrances should prove ineffectual. With the same apt policy, they flattered the pride of the British nation, with the view of engaging it to favor their cause. They manifested equal dexterity, in fomenting the political opinions that were beginning to prevail in this century. Originating at first in England, they had been diffused, by degrees, among the neighbouring nations, and particularly in France, where they had been intro-

duced, and defended with a fascinating eloquence, by the most celebrated writers of that period. Accordingly, in every place and circle, the Americans, and especially the members of congress, were considered as the generous champions of these favorite principles; for, as to the object they had in view, there no longer existed a doubt. Though it was possible, however, to excuse, and even applaud this resolution of the Americans to defend, by force of arms, the rights for which they contended, it was difficult, it must be acknowledged, to reconcile with the loyalty they so frequently professed, their insinuating writings to draw into their confederacy other subjects of the crown of England, as the Canadians, for example, who had not, or who made no pretensions to have the same rights. But, in affairs of state, utility is often mistaken for justice: and, in truth, no event could have happened more useful to the colonists than the adhesion of the Canadians to their cause.' p. 220, 221.

On the subject of the appointment of a commander in chief, he says of Putnam and Ward, 'both had declared themselves too openly in favor of independence; the Congress desired indeed to procure it but withal in a propitious time.' p. 314; and of Washington:

'It was generally thought, that he did not aim at independence, but merely desired an honorable arrangement with England. This opinion of his well corresponded with the intentions of the principal representatives, who had no objection to advancing towards independence, but were not yet prepared to discover themselves. They expected to be able so to manage affairs, that one day this great measure would become a necessity, and that Washington himself, when he should have got warm in the career, would easily allow himself to be induced, by the honor of rank, the force of things, or the voice of glory, to proceed with a firm step, even though instead of the revocation of the oppressive laws, the object of his efforts should become total independence.' pp. 316, 317.

Of the address of Congress to the inhabitants of Ireland in 1775, he remarks,

'They were not ignorant, besides, that the Irish were, for many reasons, dissatisfied with the English government, and that, notwithstanding the concessions which had recently been made them, no little animosity still rankled in their minds. The Congress purposed to avail themselves of this misunderstanding, and to irritate the wounds already festering in the breast of the Irish. It would be difficult to prove this conduct strictly consistent with loyalty. But the war was now commenced, and the Americans

were disposed to use all means to carry it on with advantage; and none are more sanctioned by usage, than those of feigning to desire peace, and of exciting and exasperating the minds of the enemy's subjects, against lawful authority. To this intent, the Congress addressed a very eloquent letter to the Irish people.' pp. 341, 342.

After giving an account of the rejection of lord North's conciliation act, the writer adds,

'Such were the conclusions of the Congress, relative to the resolution of adjustment of lord North: they caused them to be published, and distributed in all places. No one can observe the acrimonious style, and the new pretensions of the Americans, without perceiving how little they were inclined to concord.' p. 353.

'The people suffer themselves too often to be guided by vain fears, or by vain hopes; and, at this epoch, the greater part of the colonists still flattered themselves with the possibility of returning, some day or other, upon honorable terms, to their ancient footing with Great Britain. It was, indeed, quite evident, to what object the Congress was tending. It was therefore manifest, that while the two parties protested their desire to meet each other, they were both exerting all their efforts to render it impossible. It was no less evident, that when in parliament the adversaries of the ministers proposed concessions and terms of arrangement, it was with reason the latter rejected them, saying, that all these conciliatory measures would not only be useless, but even detrimental, because they would encourage the colonists to new demands, less admissible still. If the ministers themselves proposed, afterwards, and carried an act of conciliation, it was only a pretext to divide, and not to reunite. They were therefore in the right, when they resolved to continue the war at all hazards: but they were in the wrong, not to carry it on with sufficient means.' pp. 358, 359.

Having stated the departure of the royal governors from the several provinces, he proceeds as follows:

'Thus ceased, as we have related, the royal authority in the different provinces. It was replaced, progressively, by that of the people; that is, by the Congresses or conventions extraordinary, that were formed in each colony. But this was deemed insufficient, by those who directed the affairs of America. Their real object being independence, and the present state of things, as irregular and precarious by its very nature, leaving a way open of arrangement with England, and of return to the ancient connexion and dependence, they desired that such a system should be established in each province as should have the appearance of

a permanent constitution, in order to satisfy the world that the Americans were capable of governing themselves by their own laws. But the chiefs of the popular party had many difficulties to surmount in the execution of this design, notwithstanding the ardor which manifested itself in all parts to second their operations. The greater number approved resistance, but were opposed to independence, or at least shuddered at the idea of openly asserting it. For this reason, those who had the supreme direction of affairs, fearful of injuring their cause by too much precipitation, resolved to proceed with extreme circumspection; and marched to their object, always protesting that their efforts were aimed in quite another direction.' pp. 388, 389.

Of the expedition against Quebec.

'This was no longer an adhering to the defensive, but, on the contrary, a proceeding the most offensive, against a prince to whom fidelity was still protested, even carrying arms into one of his provinces, which had in no shape demanded the succors it was pretended to offer it. This was not merely exciting peaceable and uncomplaining subjects to revolt against their lawful sovereign, but also violently occupying their country, and dragging them by force into sedition.

Was it not to be feared, that an enterprise so audacious would discover too openly the intentions of the general Congress; and that then, those of the colonists who combatted with sincerity to obtain the revocation of the oppressive laws, at the same time abhorring the idea of a total separation, and even desiring to resume their former relations with Great Britain, would immediately abandon a cause which would no longer be theirs? pp. 403, 404.

Our readers would hardly pardon us, if we should enter into a labored argument to show that the war of 1756 had not rendered any considerable portion of the colonists a military people, or that on the close of that war it did not enter into the imagination of any one among them that, in case of a future controversy with the parliament, they might seek aid from the French; a people whom at that time they hated and despised no less heartily than the most prejudiced and jealous of their fellow subjects in Great Britain. Nor is it necessary to occupy much time in proving, that if the Farmer's Letters by Dickinson explained the pretensions of the colonists correctly, as is here stated, then they made no pretension to be exempt from the control of parliament, for those letters, while they utterly deny the power of that body to impose on the colonies any taxes or duties whatever, for the purpose of revenue, do

not once call in question its right to legislate on all other subjects, and expressly and repeatedly admit its authority to prohibit or restrain any branch of trade or manufactures, and to enforce rigorously that scheme of oppression, called the colonial system.

The passages above cited are in other respects not quite consistent, but on the whole they represent the colonies as desirous to shake off the British yoke long before the revolution, and Congress as secretly urging on the people to war, under pretence of wishing for peace, and dragging Washington into the support of measures, which he did not anticipate nor approve. Now all this is erroneous. There never was a more loyal people than the colonists in the middle of the eighteenth century. The distance of the throne was so far from diminishing their respect for it, that it seemed, by rendering it inaccessible to them, to cast round it an additional majesty. They venerated and loved the name of England, familiarly applying to it the endearing appellation of *home*; so that if a native of America, whose ancestors had resided here for many generations, expressed an intention to go home, he meant that he was going to the mother country, as they delighted to call it. The few, who had fought under the British standard in Canada, instead of being more impatient of their dependence on Great Britain, had acquired a sort of personal interest in her glory, and regarded their former brethren in arms with that attachment, which we always feel towards those, with whom we have shared the most intense feelings, and whose companions we have been in labor, suffering, and success. The Congress represented faithfully the sentiments of the people, and Washington, though originally as averse from independence as the great body of his fellow-citizens, was not more so.

One probable source of these errors is the desire of Mr Botta to appear perfectly impartial, which may have induced him to admit the assertions both of the English and Americans with regard to the designs of the latter, even at the hazard of a little inconsistency. The ministerial party industriously circulated the opinion, that the colonists would not be satisfied, though all their demands should be granted, and that their secret, constant, and only aim was independence; and this they did in order to diminish the popularity of the American cause in England, to weaken the opposition in parliament, and unite the nation in support of their meas-

ures. But their assertions were uniformly and strenuously denied by the Americans. Doctor Franklin, who had the best possible means of learning the temper of all classes of men in the colonies, and who did not want sagacity to penetrate their wishes and designs, relates that lord Chatham, in August 1774, remarked to him that an opinion prevailed in England that America aimed at setting up for itself as an independent state, and adds, 'I assured him that having more than once travelled almost from one end of the continent to the other, and kept a great variety of company, eating, drinking, and conversing with them freely, I never had heard in any conversation from any person, drunk or sober, the least expression of a wish for separation, or a hint that such a thing would be advantageous to America.' In addition to this authority we refer to the addresses and petitions of the Congress in 1774 and 1775, which contain the strongest protestations that they had no desire of independence, and claimed only to be restored to the enjoyment of the rights which they had formerly exercised.

No just suspicion is cast on their sincerity by their addresses to the inhabitants of England, Ireland, and Canada, for having engaged in opposition to the ministry, it was their obvious policy to win over as many as they could to their own party, to gain if possible an ascendancy in parliament, to array the nation against the ministers, and thus compel them to abandon their measures or to resign their places. With regard to lord North's conciliation act, they must have been blind indeed to be entrapped by so gross an artifice. They claimed to be exempt from all taxes imposed for the purpose of revenue, excepting such as should be laid by their colonial assemblies, and his lordship proposed in effect that the ministry should determine the amount which each colony should pay, and that its own assembly might then pass such laws as were necessary for levying the sum, as if taxation consisted not in imposing the burden, but in apportioning it. How can the rejection of this offer be called rejecting conciliation? It was an offer to yield the form, if they would give up the substance; it was pronouncing the sentence and allowing the criminals to choose the mode of execution. The invasion of Canada was undertaken in pursuance of open hostilities already commenced by the British; and it is a subtlety invented since the plain days of our fathers to call every attack on a

declared enemy offensive, and to make defensive war consist in avoiding blows without ever attempting to strike one, according to which interpretation the only legitimate mode of defence is to stand still and be beaten, or to run away.

It may be urged that the conduct of the colonists for some years before the declaration of independence, was such as necessarily tended to bring about a separation from Great Britain, and must therefore have been designed for this purpose ; or at least that they could not be so blind as not to perceive that this would be its sure result in the end. But we must recollect that few see clearly where their own interests are involved, and that we are often insensible to the natural and direct effects of our conduct, especially when they are such as we dislike to contemplate. And besides, it may be that it was not they who were blind, but we who are presumptuous. Speculative men are too apt to ascribe every accident to some design, and to judge of the motives of others not by their actions themselves, but by the remote consequences of them, to fancy that they discern some close and necessary connexion between every great change and the occurrences which preceded it, and to flatter themselves that if they had witnessed these, they should have foreseen their result. It is easy to prophecy after the event ; but we should like to see these acute philosophers, who discern so clearly the necessary connexion of the present with the past, point out a little more confidently and precisely than they commonly undertake to do, the direct and necessary consequences of the present. Whatever may be thought of the tendency of the conduct of the colonists between 1763 and 1775 to bring about a separation from Great Britain, such was not their design ; and he would have been thought little less than a madman, who should seriously have asserted during that period that they would ever consent to renounce the British name. The tendency of the conduct of the ministry and parliament was the same, yet no such design is attributed to them.

This error with regard to the sentiments existing in America at that time, seems lately to have found some countenance among ourselves. When told to seek in the early history of our country the causes of its independence, some men expect to find the desire of it springing up among the first colonists, and increasing in each successive generation. But for this they will seek in vain ; though we may undoubtedly look back

to the settlement of the country, and further still, back to the reformation, for the origin and growth of those principles and feelings, which rendered the colonists so jealous of their rights and particularly of that of taxing themselves, that when it came at last to the alternative, they did not hesitate to prefer these rights even to their allegiance, dear to them as it was ; and having made this determination, persisted in maintaining it through dangers, toils, and privations almost without example. Perhaps this error may have been encouraged also by an idea, that since the effects of our revolution have been so glorious and beneficial, it is honorable to our ancestors to assume that they anticipated those effects, and designed from the first to declare America independent in order to produce them. But no one intimately acquainted with their conduct and motives, can suppose that it adds any thing to their just praise thus to ascribe to them the gift of prophecy. Had they foreseen this rapid and astonishing prosperity, the splendor and durability of their own fame, the advantages which the revolution would yield to themselves, and those which it would confer on their children and their country, they would have exhibited no very singular merit in embracing the alternative which they chose. After the die was cast, they endeavoured very naturally to alleviate their immediate distress by indulging what were then deemed extravagant hopes of the future, but even then it never entered the wildest of their dreams, that those of them, who should live longest, or their children would look round on such a scene as more than one of the chief among them now beholds. They saw directly before and all about them difficulty, peril, and distress ; and this very independence, through which they were compelled to pass in order to obtain security, was in their opinion by no means the least of the evils they had to encounter. Yet painful as the step was, they rejoiced when it was taken, because they were by that time persuaded that it was the only means of preserving their liberty, which they valued still more highly than their allegiance. There is no doubt that individuals had different opinions with regard to the time when they should renounce their allegiance, and that a great majority in congress were ready for the measure some months before all the colonies were willing to adopt it :—not that they felt the pain of the sacrifice less, but that they saw its necessity more, and were sooner convinced that they had no other alternative than independence or subjection.

We know not how to put any construction on the addresses and petition of Congress in 1774, consistent with the opinion, that the members of that body then designed to separate the colonies from Great Britain, or believed that their constituents did so, without casting a stain on their character, which no success can wipe away ; for they repeat the most solemn asseverations, that they have no other intention or desire than to be restored to the condition in which they were before the year 1763. Were they sincere in this language, or was it, as Mr Botta fancies, a mere cloak for very different designs, calculated to deceive the ministry and ensnare their fellow-citizens ? If it were so, then their addresses and petition were not as Chatham called them in the house of lords, models of moderation and dignity, worthy of Thucydides and equal to the productions of the master states of the world, but the paltry artifices of fear and cunning, and instead of swelling with honest pride whenever they are mentioned, we ought to shut our mouths and hide our faces.

The assertion, that Washington had much stronger objections to independence than his countrymen in general, rests also on English authority. In the year 1777 it was thought that it would serve the cause of parliament to circulate the opinion, that the inclinations of the American commander were at war with his duty ; and for this purpose certain letters were written and published in England in his name, expressing the strongest disapprobation of the conduct of Congress in declaring independence, the utmost despair of success, and an anxious wish to resign his office. The impression produced by these letters among the uninformed in Great Britain, seems to have outlasted the belief that they were genuine ; at least many affected to think that they represented his sentiments truly, long after being compelled to admit that they were forgeries.

In the composition of his work Mr Botta avowedly attempts to revive the style of the classical age of Italian literature, and this attempt is approved by some of his countrymen, as tending to restore the perfection and purity of the language ; while others object that it occasions the introduction of many expressions, which, however simple and natural they may once have been, wear at this time an appearance of quaintness and affectation. Undoubtedly in style as in manners, every appearance of study is a defect ; but it belongs to Italians to decide how far that defect exists in the work before us. A foreigner,

who derives his knowledge of their language from books, is commonly as familiar with the early Italian writers as with those of the present day, and is therefore less struck with the obsolescence of the ancient idiom than a native of the country. It needs no nice acquaintance with Italian, however, to enable us to perceive the harmony, copiousness, and variety of Mr Botta's style, or to authorize us to condemn his frequent use of trite and popular maxims. They may be energetic, for none but energetic expressions are likely to become proverbial, but they have an air of vulgarity, for which, in such a work as this, their energy does not compensate.

It is our duty to say something of the translations, the titles of which are prefixed to this article. M. de Sevelinges takes unwarrantable liberties, frequently omitting whole sentences of the original without any other motive, that we can perceive, than to save himself the trouble of translating them. We have not, however, observed the omission of any important fact. How far this gentleman is qualified to judge of the correctness of Mr Botta's remarks, and of the propriety of omitting any of them, even if such a privilege were allowed to a translator, may be learned from his preface, in which he undertakes to communicate the most important information, hitherto a secret, derived, as he tells us, from an actor in the scene equally respectable for his knowledge and integrity, and supported by documents of unquestionable authority. The main object of this preface is to explain minutely the attempts of the English to induce Spain to become a mediator between them and their colonies; whereas in truth the English never made any such attempt, but the French government, with a view to drag Spain into the war, persuaded the Spanish court to offer its mediation to Great Britain, by whom it was promptly and pertinaciously rejected. Another most important secret, never known to the world till it was published by M. de Sevelinges, in his preface, is, that in America in 1778, 'the English faction of tories still existed and derived great power from the reputation of its leaders, who were,' as he informs us, '*Samuel Adams and Richard Lee.*'—'Its intrigues constantly embarrassed the deliberations of Congress, and the greatest prudence and activity were requisite to prevent the dissolution of that body and the triumph of the partisans of England.' We know not what to say to such effrontery as this, and shall only add, that the style of M. de Sevelinges is extremely careless and inaccurate.

Our countryman, Mr Otis, deserves the credit of being much more faithful. We can impute to him no wilful or presumptuous deviation from his text, but he is sometimes misled by the French translator. We do not mean to say that he merely translates the translation, for there are instances in which he conforms to the original, where M. de Sevelinges has departed from it; but there are others in which he evidently translates from the French, without consulting the Italian. In speaking of the vehemence of the British minister in Holland, Sir Joseph Yorke, when he discovered that a treaty had been made between the Dutch and Americans; Mr Otis has it, 'M. Yorke exploded violently at the Hague.' Surely the origin of this phrase is not the Italian, 'tosto Jorcke ne levò all' Aja un grandissimo romore;' but the French, 'M. Yorke éclata violemment à la Haye.' We find in this translation the following sentence, relating to the admiration with which Doctor Franklin was received in Paris; 'in all places the portraits of Franklin were exhibited; they represented him with a venerable countenance and dressed as usual, in rather a singular costume, *the more to attract attention*.' This last trait is not to be found in the Italian, but is introduced by M. de Sevelinges. It is neither honorable to Doctor Franklin, nor just to represent him as walking about in a singular dress, like Rousseau in his Armenian habit, for no other purpose than to attract the attention of the gazers of Paris. The following passage in the close of Mr Botta's work is omitted by both translators.

'The confederations, which are formed by several powerful nations against a single one, on account of some reform that it chooses to make in the structure of its government, and which threaten not only to defeat its object, but to deprive it of freedom and independence, generally induce its rulers to renounce every thing like prudence and moderation, and to resort to the most violent and extraordinary measures, which soon exhaust the resources of the country and excite discontent among its inhabitants; till oppressed and harassed in every form, by the officers of government, they are driven at last into civil commotions, in which the strength of the community is wasted. And besides, these violent measures so disgust the people with the whole undertaking, that, confounding the abuse of a thing with the use of it, they choose rather to retreat to the point from which they set out, or even further back, than to continue their progress towards the object originally proposed. Hence it is, that, if that object were liberty,

they afterwards rush into despotism, preferring the tyranny of one to that of many.' vol. iv, p. 464.

We can readily imagine that the censors of the press under Napoleon would prohibit the publication of these sentiments at Paris in French, even though they permitted them to be printed there in Italian, but no such reason exists for their omission in an American translation. This translation contains several expressions not admissible in our language, some of them apparently derived from M. de Sevelinges; thus we find 'ways of fact,' 'half portice,' 'the fiscal,' 'debonnaire,' and Arnold's soldiers in the expedition to Quebec are said in both translations, though not in the original, to have 'scaled mountains perpendicular.' The authority of the dictionary is not sufficient to justify the use of such terms as 'collectitious soldiery,' 'vortical gusts,' and 'belluine executors of the king's will.' These things are mentioned in order that they may be corrected in another edition. We are duly sensible of our obligation to Mr Otis, for making this history accessible to us in our own language, not only on account of its intrinsic merit, but because it gratifies our rational curiosity to learn what sentiments are entertained towards us by those foreigners, who look on our country with a candid and even a favorable eye. We believe such men to be more numerous and more respectable in every European nation, than those who delight to dwell on our faults and follies.

Perhaps the most effectual and most agreeable mode of giving our readers an idea of the translator's style will be to make a few extracts from the work, and we shall select passages, which may show at the same time Mr Botta's talent for description, though we must choose not the best, but such as can be included within the limits assigned to this article. The sea fight between Paul Jones and Captain Pearson in 1779 is described with great spirit.

'Paul Jones, a Scotchman by birth, but engaged in the service of the United States, had established his cruise at first in the seas of Ireland, and afterwards in those of Scotland, where he was waiting for an opportunity to make some prize, or, according to his practice, to land upon some point of the coast in order to sack the country. His flotilla was composed of the *Bonhomme Richard* of forty guns, the *Alliance* of thirty-six, both American ships; the *Pallas*, a French frigate of thirty-two, in the pay of Congress, with two other smaller vessels. He fell in with a British merchant

fleet, on its return from the Baltic, convoyed by captain Pearson, with the frigate *Serapis*, of forty-four guns, and the *Countess of Scarborough*, of twenty.

Pearson had no sooner perceived Jones, than he bore down to engage him, while the merchantmen endeavored to gain the coast. The American flotilla formed to receive him. The two enemies joined battle at about seven in the evening, with great resolution, and the conflict was supported on both sides with equal valor. The *Serapis* had the advantage of metal and manœuvre; to obviate which, Jones took the resolution to fight her closer. He advanced till the two frigates were engaged yard to yard, and their sides so near that the muzzles of their guns came in contact. In this position they continued to fight from eight in the evening till ten, with an audacity bordering on frenzy. But the artillery of the Americans was no longer capable of producing much effect. The *Richard* having received several heavy shot between wind and water, could now make no use whatever of her lower batteries, and two or three of her upper guns had burst, to the destruction of those who served them. Jones, at length, had only three left that could be worked, and he employed them against the masts of the hostile frigate. Seeing the little impression made by chain-shot, he resorted to another mode of attack. He threw a vast quantity of grenades and fire-works on board the British frigate. But his own now admitted the water on all sides, and threatened every moment to go to the bottom. Some of his officers having perceived it, asked him if he would surrender? "No," he answered them in a tremendous tone, and continued to push the grenades. The *Serapis* was already on fire in several places; the English could, with difficulty, extinguish the flames. Finally, they caught a cartridge, which, in an instant, fired all the others with a horrible explosion. All who stood near the helm were killed, and all the cannon of that part were dismounted. Meanwhile, Pearson was not disheartened: he ordered his people to board. Paul Jones prepared himself to repulse them. The English in jumping on board him found the Americans ready to receive them on the point of their pikes; they made the best of their way back to their own vessel. But during this interval, the fire had communicated itself from the *Serapis* to the *Bonhomme Richard*, and both were a prey to the flames. No peril could shake these desperate men. The night was dark, the combatants could no longer see each other but by the blaze of the conflagration, and through dense volumes of smoke, while the sea was illuminated afar. At this moment, the American frigate *Alliance* came up. Amidst the confusion she discharged her broadside into the *Richard*, and killed a part of her remaining defenders. As soon as she discovered her mistake, she fell with augmented

fury upon the *Serapis*. Then the valiant Englishman, seeing a great part of his crew either killed or disabled, his artillery dismounted, his vessel dismasted, and quite enveloped in flames, surrendered. All joined to extinguish the fire, and at length it was accomplished. The efforts made to stop the numerous leaks of the *Richard* proved less fortunate; she sunk the next morning. Out of three hundred and seventy-five men that were aboard that vessel, three hundred were killed or wounded. The English had but forty-nine killed, and their wounded amounted to no more than sixty-eight. History, perhaps, offers no example of an action more fierce, obstinate and sanguinary. During this time the *Palas* had attacked the Countess of Scarborough and had captured her, not however without a stubborn resistance. After a victory so hard-earned, so deplorable, Jones wandered with his shattered vessels for some days, at the mercy of the winds, in the north sea. He finally made his way good, on the sixth of October, into the waters of the *Texel*.' pp. 112—114.

The account of the battle of Cowpens between Morgan and Tarleton is also highly animated and graphic.

'Tarleton, after having passed with equal celerity and good fortune the rivers Ennoree and Tiger, presented himself upon the banks of the Pacolet. Morgan retreated thence forthwith, and Tarleton set himself to pursue him. He pressed him hard. Morgan felt how full of danger was become the passage of Broad river, in the presence of so enterprising an enemy as now hung upon his rear. He therefore thought it better to make a stand. He formed his troops in two divisions; the first composed of militia, under the conduct of colonel Pickens, occupied the front of a wood, in view of the enemy; the second, commanded by colonel Howard, was concealed in the wood itself, and consisted of his marksmen and old continental troops. Colonel Washington, with his cavalry, was posted behind the second division, as a reserve. Tarleton soon came up and formed in two lines; his infantry in the centre of each, and his horse on the flanks. Every thing seemed to promise him victory. He was superior in cavalry, and his troops, both officers and soldiers, manifested an extreme ardor. The English attacked the first American line; after a single discharge with little harm to the enemy, it fled in confusion. They then fell upon the second; but here they found a more obstinate resistance. The action was engaged and supported with equal advantage. Tarleton, to decide it in his favor, pushed forward a battalion of his second line, and at the same time directed a charge of cavalry upon the right flank of the Americans. He was afraid to attack their left, supported by colonel Washington, who had already vigorously repulsed an

assault of the British light horse. The manœuvre of Tarleton had the expected effect; the American regulars gave way and were thrown into disorder. The English rushed on, persuaded that the day was now their own. Already Tarleton with his cavalry was in full pursuit of the routed, when colonel Washington, whose troop was still entire, fell upon the enemy with such impetuosity, that in a few moments he had restored the battle. During this interval, colonel Howard had rallied his continental troops, and led them back upon the English. Colonel Pickens had also, by prodigious efforts, re-assembled the militia and again brought them to the fire. Morgan was visible everywhere; his presence and words re-animated the spirits of his soldiers. He profited of that moment of enthusiasm to precipitate them in one general charge upon the enemy. The shock was so tremendous that the English at first paused, then recoiled, and soon fled in confusion. The Americans pursued them with inexpressible eagerness. It was in vain that the British officers employed exhortations, prayers and threats to stay the fugitives; the discomfiture was total. Tarleton lost, in dead, wounded and prisoners, more than eight hundred men, two pieces of cannon, the colors of the seventh regiment, all his carriages and baggage.' pp. 249—251.

The hurricane of Barbadoes in 1780, presents a scene of terror hardly inferior to the plague of Athens.

‘The events we have been relating were succeeded, in the West Indies, by a sort of general truce between the two parties. But though the fury of men was suspended for a while, that of the elements broke out in a manner much more tremendous. It was now the month of October, and the inhabitants of the islands were in the enjoyment of that unexpected tranquillity which resulted from the cessation of arms, when their shores and the seas that washed them, were assailed by so dreadful a tempest, that scarcely would there be found a similar example in the whole series of maritime records, however replete with shocking disasters and pitiable shipwrecks. If this fearful scourge fell with more or less violence upon all the islands of the West Indies, it no where raged with more destructive energy than in the flourishing island of Barbadoes. It was on the morning of the tenth that the tornado set in, and it hardly began to abate forty-eight hours after. The vessels that were moored in the port, where they considered themselves in safety, were wrenched from their anchors, launched into the open sea, and abandoned to the mercy of the tempest. Nor was the condition of the inhabitants on shore less worthy of compassion. In the following night, the vehemence of the hurricane became yet more extreme: houses were demolished, trees uproot-

ed, men and animals tossed hither and thither, or overwhelmed by the ruins. The capital of the island was well nigh razed to a level with the ground. The mansion of the governor, the walls of which were three feet in thickness, was shaken to its foundations, and every moment threatened to crumble to ruins. Those within had hastened to barricade the doors and windows to resist the whirlwinds; all their efforts were of no avail. The doors were rent from their hinges, the bars and fastenings forced; and chasms started in the very walls. The governor with his family sought refuge in the subterraneous vaults: but they were soon driven from that shelter by the torrents of water that poured like a new deluge from the sky. They issued then into the open country, and with extreme difficulty and continual perils repaired under the covert of a mound, upon which the flag-staff was erected; but that mass being itself rocked by the excessive fury of the wind, the apprehension of being buried under the stones that were detached from it compelled them again to remove, and to retire from all habitation. Happily for them they held together; for, without the mutual aid they lent each other, they must all inevitably have perished. After a long and toilsome march in the midst of ruins, they succeeded in gaining a battery, where they stretched themselves face downward on the ground, behind the carriages of the heaviest cannon, still a wretched and doubtful asylum, since those very carriages were continually put in motion by the impetuosity of the vortical gusts. The other houses of the city being less solid, had been prostrated before that of the governor, and their unhappy inhabitants wandered as chance directed during that merciless night, without shelter and without succor. Many perished under the ruins of their dwellings; others were the victims of the sudden inundation; several were suffocated in the mire. The thickness of the darkness, the lurid fire of the lightning, the continual peal of the thunder, the horrible whistling of the winds and rain, the doleful cries of the dying, the despondent moans of those who were unable to succor them, the shrieks and wailings of women and children, all seemed to announce the destruction of the world. But the return of day presented to the view of the survivors a spectacle which the imagination scarcely dares to depict. This island, lately so rich, so flourishing, so covered with enchanting landscapes, appeared all of a sudden transformed into one of those polar regions where an eternal winter reigns. Not an edifice left standing; wrecks and ruins every where; every tree subverted; not an animal alive; the earth strown with their remains, intermingled with those of human beings; the very surface of the soil appeared no longer the same. Not merely the crops that were in prospect, and those already gathered, had been devoured by the hurricane: the gar-

dens, the fields, those sources of the delight and opulence of the colonists, had ceased to exist. In their place were found deep sand, or sterile clay; the enclosures had disappeared; the ditches were filled up, the roads cut with deep ravines. The dead amounted to some thousands: thus much is known, though the precise number is not ascertained. In effect, besides those whose fallen houses became their tombs, how many were swept away by the waves of the swollen sea and by the torrents, resembling rivers, which gushed from the hills? Much of what escaped the fury of the tempest fell a prey to the frantic violence of men. As soon as the gates of the prisons were burst, the criminals sallied forth, and joining the negroes, always prepared for nefarious deeds, they seemed to brave the wrath of heaven, and put every thing to sack and plunder. And perhaps the whites would have been all massacred, and the whole island consigned to perdition, if general Vaughan, who happened to be there at the time, had not watched over the public safety at the head of a body of regular troops. His cares were successful in saving a considerable quantity of provision, but for which resource the inhabitants would only have escaped the ravages of the hurricane, to be victims of the no less horrible scourge of famine. Nor should it be passed over in silence by a sincere friend of truth and honorable deeds, that the Spanish prisoners of war, at this time considerably numerous in Barbadoes, under the conduct of Don Pedro San Jago, did every thing that could be expected of brave and generous soldiers. Far from profiting of this calamitous conjuncture to abuse their liberty, they voluntarily encountered perils of every kind to succor the unfortunate islanders, who warmly acknowledged their services. The other islands, French as well as English, were not much less devastated than Barbadoes. At Jamaica, a violent earthquake added its horrors to the rage of the tornado; the sea rose and overflowed its bounds with such impetuosity, that the inundation extended far into the interior of the island.

‘In consequence of the direction of the wind, the effects of the sea-flood were the most destructive in the districts of Hanover and Westmoreland. While the inhabitants of Savanna-la-Mer, a considerable village of Westmoreland, stood observing with dismay the extraordinary swell of the sea, the accumulated surge broke over them, and in an instant, men, animals, habitations, every thing was carried with it into the abyss. Not a vestige remained of that unhappy town. More than three hundred persons were thus swallowed up by the waves. The most fertile fields were left overspread with a deep stratum of sterile sand. The most opulent families were reduced in a moment to the extreme of indigence. If the fate of those who found themselves on shore was deplorable beyond all expression, the condition of

those who were upon the water was not less to be pitied. Some of the vessels were dashed upon shoals and breakers, others foundered in the open ocean, a few made their way good into port, but grievously battered and damaged. The tempest was not only fatal to ships under sail, it spared not even those that were at anchor in the securest havens.' pp. 176—180.

But there is no more striking proof of Mr Botta's fine taste, than the incident, which he selects for the conclusion of his history, and the admirable simplicity with which he relates it, without weakening its effect by any attempt to point out its particular beauties, or by incumbering it with moral reflections. No ornament indeed could add to the impressive dignity of the scene. We know nothing in all history to be compared to it, and pity the man, who, with the events which led to it fresh in his memory, can read or recollect it without emotion.

'The army was disbanded ; but the supreme command still remained in the hands of Washington : the public mind was intent upon what he was about to do. His prudence reminded him that it was time to put a term to the desire of military glory ; his thoughts were now turned exclusively upon leaving to his country a great example of moderation. The Congress was then in session at the city of Annapolis in Maryland. Washington communicated to that body his resolution to resign the command, and requested to know whether it would be their pleasure that he should offer his resignation in writing, or at an audience. The Congress answered that they appointed the twenty-third of December for that ceremony. When this day arrived, the hall of Congress was crowded with spectators ; the legislative and executive characters of the state, several general officers, and the consul-general of France were present. The members of Congress remained seated and covered. The spectators were standing and uncovered. The general was introduced by the secretary, and conducted to a seat near the president. After a decent interval, silence was commanded, and a short pause ensued. The president, general Mifflin, then informed him, that the United States in Congress assembled were prepared to receive his communications. Washington rose, and with an air of inexpressible dignity, delivered the following address :

'"Mr President; the great events on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I have now the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country. Happy in the confirmation of our inde-

pendence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation, I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence; a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the Union, and the patronage of heaven. The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest. While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the gentlemen who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible the choice of confidential officers to compose my family should have been more fortunate. Permit me, sir, to recommend in particular, those who have continued in the service to the present moment, as worthy of the favorable notice and patronage of Congress.

“I consider it as an indispensable duty, to close this last act of my official life by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping. Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.”

‘Having spoken thus, he advanced to the chair of the president and deposited the commission in his hands. The president made him, in the name of Congress, the following answer :

“Sir, the United States in Congress assembled, receive with emotions too affecting for utterance, the solemn resignation of the authorities under which you have led their troops with success through a perilous and a doubtful war. Called upon by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge, before it had formed alliances, and whilst it was without funds or a government to support you. You have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes. You have, by the love and confidence of your fellow citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and transmit their fame to posterity. You have persevered, until the United States, aided by a magnanimous king and nation, have been enabled, under a just Providence, to close the war in freedom, safety, and independence; on which happy event, we sincerely join you in congratulations. Having defended the

standard of liberty in this New World, having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict, and to those who feel oppression, you retire from the great theatre of action, with the blessing of your fellow-citizens; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command; it will continue to animate the remotest ages. We feel, with you, our obligations to the army in general, and will particularly charge ourselves with the interests of those confidential officers who have attended your person to this affecting moment. We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of its citizens to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation. And for you, we address to him our earnest prayers that a life so beloved, may be fostered with all his care; that your days may be happy as they have been illustrious; and that he will finally give you that reward which this world cannot give."

'When the president had terminated his discourse, a long and profound silence pervaded the whole assembly. All minds appeared impressed with the grandeur of the scene, the recollections of the past, the felicity of the present, and the hopes of the future. The captain general and Congress were the object of universal eulogium.

'A short time after this ceremony, Washington retired to enjoy the long desired repose of his seat of Mount-Vernon, in Virginia.'



ART. X.—*Oeuvres Complètes de Jacques Henri Bernardin de St Pierre, mises en ordre, et précédées de la vie de l'auteur par L. Aimé Martin.* 12 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1818—1820.

THIS is the first collection that has appeared of the writings of Bernardin de St Pierre. The *Studies of Nature*, comprehending Paul and Virginia and the Indian Cottage, was the only considerable book published by the author during his life. The present collection contains another work in three volumes octavo, entitled the *Harmonies of Nature*, which was left unfinished, and might perhaps as well have remained unpublished. It is in substance nothing more than a repetition of the same ideas that are developed in a better form in the *Studies*. It serves with several other posthumous pieces to swell the number of volumes, and perhaps the booksellers'